



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

NEWS RELEASE

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#01-09

May 21, 2001

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE AUTHORIZES LETHAL CONTROL OF TWO GRAY WOLVES

Two gray wolves, involved in the depredation of a mature cow and her calf near Clayton, Idaho, have been shot and killed by Federal wildlife specialists. A subadult male, B-104, from the Moyer Basin Pack, and two other uncollared wolves, were observed and videotaped in the act of depredation on May 11, 2001. USDA Wildlife Services confirmed that the cow had been killed by wolves, and initiated the lethal control action on recommendations of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Nez Perce Tribe.

An uncollared female gray wolf was located with B-104 and shot on May 12, 2001 by Wildlife Services. The helicopter used in the control action was then used to haze two other wolves from the area. Since B-104 was the only depredating wolf with a radio collar, he was not lethally removed at that time. Subsequent behavior and harassment of livestock by B-104 led to the decision on May 16, 2001, to lethally remove him. That lethal removal was accomplished on the afternoon of May 16, 2001. Examination of B-104 revealed a serious foreleg injury that hampered the animal's ability to travel and probably caused him to remain near livestock operations.

Several yearling and subadult wolves from the Stanley and Moyer Basin packs have been in the Clayton-Challis area for the past several weeks. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Wolf Recovery Coordinator Carter Niemeyer noted that, "Radio-activated guards units ("RAG boxes") have been successfully used to discourage wolves from the Challis landfill and private ranches near Clayton and the East Fork of the Salmon River. We are hopeful that this lethal control action and helicopter hazing will further discourage any other wolves from remaining near livestock operations. It appears that other radio-collared wolves have moved to higher elevations away from ranches."

Wolves in Idaho are making progress toward recovery. Since the initial reintroduction of 35 wolves into the nonessential, experimental area in northern Idaho in 1995-1996, the gray wolf population has increased to about 190 individuals.

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The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 94-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System which encompasses 535 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 70 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices and 78 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

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